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ABSTRACT

This research brief from Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC) (Florida) addresses the retention rates of students enrolled in intervention courses. In July of 1998, an evaluation of the new SLS (College Survival Skills) intervention courses for college preparatory students indicated that students who successfully completed SLS had a significantly higher fall-to-winter retention rate (88% returned) than students who did not take SLS (68% returned). The current study looks at fall-to-fall retention rates and adds a comparison with college-ready students. Results indicate that: (1) college preparatory students who take and pass the SLS intervention courses during their first term have a retention rate equal to or better than college ready students; (2) college preparatory students who do not take the SLS courses have about a 10-percentage point lower retention rate than those who take and pass the courses; (3) college-wide, full-time students who needed only one college preparatory area and completed SLS 1505 had a higher retention rate (84%) than college-ready students (75%); (4) college-wide, 70-73% of students who tested into college preparatory courses in one area did not take SLS 1505 during their first term; and (5) for full-time students, the return rate of these non-SLS takers was 67%, compared with 84% for successful SLS students and 75% for college-ready students. (JA)



TOPIC: RETENTION

MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

INFORMATION CAPSULE

I.C. No. 2001-1C

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MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

INFORMATION CAPSULE

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February, 2001

Retention Rates of Successful SLS Students

Summary:

In July of 1998, an evaluation of the new SLS intervention courses for college preparatory students indicated that students who successfully completed SLS had a significantly higher Fall-to-Winter retention rate (87.8% returned) than students who did not take SLS (67.6% returned). The current study looks at Fall-to-Fall retention rates and adds a comparison with college ready students.

Results indicate that college preparatory students who take and pass the SLS intervention courses during their first term have a retention rate equal to or better than college ready students. Results also indicate that college preparatory students who do not take the SLS courses have about a 10 percentage point lower retention rate than those who take the courses.

Introduction and Purpose:

Students who test below college-level skills on the Computerized Placement Test (CPT) are required to take college preparatory courses in the appropriate area(s). Students placing into college preparatory course work in one subject area are also required to enroll concurrently in SLS 1505 (College Survival Skills). Those placing into college preparatory in two or more subject areas are required to enroll concurrently in SLS 1535 (Preparing for Student Success). The purpose of the present study was to compare the Fall-to-Fall retention rate of First-Time-in-College students based on the number of college prep areas needed and whether the students took the required SLS courses their first term.

Retention Rates of Successful SLS Students:

Table 1 shows the Fall-to-Fall return rate of students who tested into college preparatory and successfully completed the appropriate SLS course during their first term, compared with the Fall-to-Fall return rate of college ready students. Students are separated by their Full- or Part-time status since part-time students will generally have a lower retention rate.

College-wide, full-time students who needed only one college preparatory area and completed SLS 1505 had a higher retention rate (84%) than college-ready students (75%). Part-time SLS students' retention rate (63%) equaled that of college-ready students (63%). For students who needed two or three college preparatory areas and successfully completed SLS 1535, the retention rate was essentially the same as that of college ready students. Campus results mirror the college-wide findings.

Retention Rates of Non-SLS Takers:

Table 2 shows the Fall-to-Fall return rate of students who tested into college preparatory and did not take the appropriate SLS course during their first term, compared with the return rate of those who successfully completed SLS. College-wide, students who did not take the required SLS course during their first term had at least a 10 percentage point lower retention rate than those who took and passed SLS. This finding was consistent for both full- and part-time students, and for students needing one, two, or three college preparatory areas. Once again, campus results mirror the college-wide findings.

SLS Enrollment:

Table 3 combines the data from the first two tables, and adds a column that indicates the percent of students who did not take the appropriate SLS course during their first term. College-wide, 70-73% of students who tested into *college preparatory in one area* did not take SLS 1505 during their first term. For full-time students, the return rate of these non-SLS takers was 67%, compared to 84% for successful SLS students, and 75% for college-ready students. For part-time students, the return rate of the non-SLS takers was 54%, compared to 63% for successful SLS students and college-ready students.

The results are somewhat better for students who tested into *college preparatory in two or three areas*. College-wide, only 30-36% of these students did not take SLS 1535 during their first term. For full-time students, the return rate of the non-SLS takers was 62%, compared to 73% for successful SLS students, and 75% for college-ready students. For part-time students, the return rate of the non-SLS takers was 49%, compared to 63% for successful SLS students and college-ready students.

Conclusions:

The data presented in this capsule indicate that students who tested into college preparatory and took and passed the SLS intervention courses during their first term had a higher Fall-to-Fall retention rate than students who did not take the courses. In fact, the retention rate of the SLS students matched that of college-ready students. Fully 70% of students needing college preparatory in one skill area did not take SLS 1505 during their first term. And, 30% or more of students needing two or more college preparatory areas did not take SLS 1535. These 'required' courses show clear benefits for student retention, and the data suggest that the College should place renewed emphasis on ensuring that students take them.

Method:

Files were accessed using SAS programs specifically written for this purpose. The study group consisted of Fall term 1999 first-time-in-college credit students from Record 1 of the Student Data Base (SDB) who also had placement scores (Record 2). Only students with a complete set of scores were included in the study. The SDB course records (Record 6) were then used to determine if students took either SLS course, and to note their grades. Students' SLS status was then coded as: passed, failed, or not taken. Campus was determined by linking to the Fall 1999 MSS040 demographic file and assigning the campus where the majority of credits was taken. If no campus had a majority of credits, Home Campus was used as the default. Return rate was determined by a Social Security number match to the Fall 2000 MSS040 file.

Cathy Morris:ab

Table 1
Return Rate of Successful Fall 1999 First-Time-in-College SLS Students
Compared with College Ready Students

Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students			
College Prep Areas Needed	Fall 1999-1 SLS 1505 or 1535 Status	No.	Fall 2000-1 Return	% Return	Fall 1999-1 SLS 1505 or 1535 Status	No.	Fall 2000-1 Return	% Return
College Total								
One	Passed	108	91	84%	Passed	119	75	63%
Two or Three	Passed	580	423	73%	Passed	662	419	63%
None (College Ready)		573	427	75%		253	159	63%
North Campus								
One	Passed	48	36	75%	Passed	55	31	56%
Two or Three	Passed	219	149	68%	Passed	342	207	61%
None (College Ready)		171	124	73%		82	50	61%
Kendall Campus								
One	Passed	40	37	93%	Passed	49	35	71%
Two or Three	Passed	247	188	76%	Passed	168	107	64%
None (College Ready)		282	214	76%		123	82	67%
Wolfson Campus								
One	Passed	15	14	93%	Passed	7**	5	71%
Two or Three	Passed	82	67	82%	Passed	115	81	70%
None (College Ready)		79	58	73%		29	17	59%
Homestead Campus								
One	Passed	1**	1	100%	Passed	3**	1	33%
Two or Three	Passed	23	14	61%	Passed	14	5	36%
None (College Ready)		34	26	76%		10	5	50%
InterAmerican Campus								
One	Passed	4**	3	75%	Passed	5**	3	60%
Two or Three	Passed	9**	5	56%	Passed	23	19	83%
None (College Ready)		6**	4	67%		6**	3	50%

** Numbers too small for meaningful conclusions.

Prepared By: Institutional Research (CMM), 2/8/2001

Source: SAS analysis of SDB for FTIC, College Prep & SLS; IRS40 for majority campus enrolled and return rates.

Table 2
Return Rate of Successful Fall 1999 First-Time-in-College SLS Students
Compared with Students Who Did Not Take SLS

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students				Part-Time First-Time Students			
	Fall 1999-1 SLS 1505 or 1535 Status	No.	Fall 2000-1 Return	% Return	Fall 1999-1 SLS 1505 or 1535 Status	No.	Fall 2000-1 Return	% Return
College Total								
One	Not Taken	326	217	67%	Not Taken	410	221	54%
	Passed	108	91	84%	Passed	119	75	63%
Two or Three	Not Taken	332	207	62%	Not Taken	480	233	49%
	Passed	580	423	73%	Passed	662	419	63%
None (College Ready)		573	427	75%		253	159	63%
North Campus								
One	Not Taken	93	60	65%	Not Taken	95	45	47%
	Passed	48	36	75%	Passed	55	31	56%
Two or Three	Not Taken	57	34	60%	Not Taken	89	41	46%
	Passed	219	149	68%	Passed	342	207	61%
None (College Ready)		171	124	73%		82	50	61%
Kendall Campus								
One	Not Taken	168	109	65%	Not Taken	215	128	60%
	Passed	40	37	93%	Passed	49	35	71%
Two or Three	Not Taken	174	111	64%	Not Taken	245	126	51%
	Passed	247	188	76%	Passed	168	107	64%
None (College Ready)		282	214	76%		123	82	67%
Wolfson Campus								
One	Not Taken	49	35	71%	Not Taken	55	25	45%
	Passed	15	14	93%	Passed	7**	5	71%
Two or Three	Not Taken	59	41	69%	Not Taken	78	32	41%
	Passed	82	67	82%	Passed	115	81	70%
None (College Ready)		79	58	73%		29	17	59%
Homestead Campus								
One	Not Taken	15	13	87%	Not Taken	25	14	56%
	Passed	1**	1	100%	Passed	3**	1	33%
Two or Three	Not Taken	34	17	50%	Not Taken	41	21	51%
	Passed	23	14	61%	Passed	14	5	36%
None (College Ready)		34	26	76%		10	5	50%
InterAmerican Campus								
One	Not Taken	1**	0	0%	Not Taken	12	6	50%
	Passed	4**	3	75%	Passed	5**	3	60%
Two or Three	Not Taken	8**	4	50%	Not Taken	24	11	46%
	Passed	9**	5	56%	Passed	23	19	83%
None (College Ready)		6**	4	67%		6**	3	50%

** Numbers too small for meaningful conclusions.

Prepared By: Institutional Research (CMM), 2/8/2001

Source: SAS analysis of SDB for FTIC, College Prep & SLS; IRS40 for majority campus enrolled and return rates.

Table 3
Return Rate of Fall 1999 First-Time Students
By SLS Status
College Total

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	326	70%	217	67%	Not Taken	410	73%	221	54%
	Passed	108	23%	91	84%	Passed	119	21%	75	63%
	Failed	32	7%	13	41%	Failed	30	5%	13	43%
	Total	466	100%	321	69%	Total	559	100%	309	55%
Two or Three	SLS 1535					SLS 1535				
	Not Taken	332	30%	207	62%	Not Taken	480	36%	233	49%
	Passed	580	53%	423	73%	Passed	662	49%	419	63%
	Failed	177	16%	58	33%	Failed	210	16%	65	31%
	Total	1,089	100%	688	63%	Total	1,352	100%	717	53%
College Ready Students		573		427	75%				159	63%
Grand Total		2,128		1,436	67%	Grand Total		2,164	1,185	55%

North Campus

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	93	60%	60	65%	Not Taken	95	59%	45	47%
	Passed	48	31%	36	75%	Passed	55	34%	31	56%
	Failed	13	8%	7	54%	Failed	10	6%	1	10%
	Total	154	100%	103	67%	Total	160	100%	77	48%
Two or Three	SLS1535					SLS1535				
	Not Taken	57	17%	34	60%	Not Taken	89	16%	41	46%
	Passed	219	64%	149	68%	Passed	342	63%	207	61%
	Failed	64	19%	18	28%	Failed	109	20%	29	27%
	Total	340	100%	201	59%	Total	540	100%	277	51%
College Ready Students		171		124	73%			82	50	61%
Grand Total		665		428	64%	Grand Total		782	404	52%

Kendall Campus

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	168	77%	109	65%	Not Taken	215	79%	128	60%
	Passed	40	18%	37	93%	Passed	49	18%	35	71%
	Failed	10	5%	5	50%	Failed	9	3%	6	67%
	Total	218	100%	151	69%	Total	273	100%	169	62%
Two or Three	SLS1535					SLS1535				
	Not Taken	174	35%	111	64%	Not Taken	245	52%	126	51%
	Passed	247	50%	188	76%	Passed	168	36%	107	64%
	Failed	77	15%	30	39%	Failed	55	12%	22	40%
	Total	498	100%	329	66%	Total	468	100%	255	54%
College Ready Students		282		214	76%			123	82	67%
Grand Total		998		694	70%	Grand Total		864	506	59%

Prepared By: Institutional Research (CMM), 2/8/2001

Source: SAS analysis of SDB for FTIC, College Prep & SLS; IRS40 for majority campus enrolled and return rates.

Table 3 (Continued)
Return Rate of Fall 1999 First-Time Students
By SLS Status
Wolfson Campus

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	49	67%	35	71%	Not Taken	55	80%	25	45%
	Passed	15	21%	14	93%	Passed	7	10%	5	71%
	Failed	9	12%	1	11%	Failed	7	10%	5	71%
	Total	73	100%	50	68%	Total	69	100%	35	51%
Two or Three	SLS1535					SLS1535				
	Not Taken	59	34%	41	69%	Not Taken	78	35%	32	41%
	Passed	82	47%	67	82%	Passed	115	51%	81	70%
	Failed	33	19%	8	24%	Failed	33	15%	9	27%
	Total	174	100%	116	67%	Total	226	100%	122	54%
College Ready Students		79		58	73%				17	59%
Grand Total		326		224	69%	Grand Total			174	54%

Homestead Campus

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	15	94%	13	87%	Not Taken	25	89%	14	56%
	Passed	1	6%	1	100%	Passed	3	11%	1	33%
	Failed	0	0%	0	0%	Failed	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	16	100%	14	88%	Total	28	100%	15	54%
Two or Three	SLS1535					SLS1535				
	Not Taken	34	59%	17	50%	Not Taken	41	72%	21	51%
	Passed	23	40%	14	61%	Passed	14	25%	5	36%
	Failed	1	2%	0	0%	Failed	2	4%	1	50%
	Total	58	100%	31	53%	Total	57	100%	27	47%
College Ready Students		34		26	76%				5	50%
Grand Total		108		71	66%	Grand Total			47	49%

InterAmerican Campus

College Prep Areas Needed	Full-Time First-Time Students					Part-Time First-Time Students				
	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return	1999-1 Course	No.	% of Total	2000-1 Return	% Return
One	SLS 1505					SLS 1505				
	Not Taken	1	20%	0	0%	Not Taken	12	57%	6	50%
	Passed	4	80%	3	75%	Passed	5	24%	3	60%
	Failed	0	0%	0	0%	Failed	4	19%	1	25%
	Total	5	100%	3	60%	Total	21	100%	10	48%
Two or Three	SLS1535					SLS1535				
	Not Taken	8	42%	4	50%	Not Taken	24	43%	11	46%
	Passed	9	47%	5	56%	Passed	23	41%	19	83%
	Failed	2	11%	2	100%	Failed	9	16%	3	33%
	Total	19	100%	11	58%	Total	56	100%	33	59%
College Ready Students		6		4	67%				3	50%
Grand Total		30		18	60%	Grand Total			46	55%

Prepared By: Institutional Research (CMM), 2/8/2001

Source: SAS analysis of SDB for FTIC, College Prep & SLS; IRS40 for majority campus enrolled and return rates.



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